

Message Text

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22

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-11 ISO-00 ORM-02 DHA-02 SAM-01 AID-05

OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 VO-03 SCA-01

INSE-00 AF-06 /101 W

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0072

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 0933

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR SREF US CVIS IS

SUBJECT: WORLD CONGRESS ON SOVIET JEWRY

REF: (A) BRUSSELS 1088, (B) BRUSSELS 859

1. LIKUD KNESSET MEMBER S.Z. ABRAMOV, ONE OF ISRAEL'S PROMOTERS OF SECOND WORLD CONGRESS ON SOVIET JEWRY (BRUSSELS FEB 17-19), FAS PROVIDED US WITH FOLLOWING ACCOUNT OF PREPARATORY PHASE AND ASSESSMENT OF ITS OBJECTIVES. ABOUT 1,100 DELEGATES ARE EXPECTED TO ATTEND, ONE THIRD OF THEM FROM THE U.S. MAJOR JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS FROM NORTH AMERICA, SOUTH AMERICA, ISRAEL AND EUROPE, PLUS JEWISH AGENCY, WZO, AND WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS WILL BE REPRESENTED.

2. PURPOSE OF CONGRESS IS: A) TO ALERT WORLD TO CONTINUING PERSECUTION OF JEWS IN SOVIET UNION; B) TO OBTAIN DECLARATIONS OF SUPPORT FROM WESTERN GOVERNMENTS AND
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DEMOCRATIC ORGANIZATIONS; AND C) TO DEMONSTRATE TO

SOVIET JEWS THAT THE WORLD AND JEWISH COMMUNITY ARE NOT ABANDONING THEM.

3. CONGRESS WILL BE HOSTED BY MAYOR OF BRUSSELS AND SEVERAL BELGIAN CABINET MEMBERS WILL SIT ON CONGRESS DAIS, THUS INDICATING QUASI-OFFICIAL BELGIAN SPONSORSHIP. STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT ARE EXPECTED FROM PRESIDENT FORD, U.S. CONGRESS, PRIME MINISTER WILSON AND MOST EUROPEAN LEADERS, EXCEPT THE FRENCH.

4. ABRAMOV TOLD US THAT SOVIETS THROUGH EAST EUROPEAN SOURCES HAD STARTED TO BARGAIN WITH SPONSORS OF CONGRESS, OFFERING LIBERALIZATION OF JEWISH EMIGRATION IN RETURN FOR ITS POSTPONEMENT UNTIL AFTER 25TH CPSU CONGRESS. HOWEVER, AFTER CONSULTATION WITH SEVERAL WEST EUROPEAN COMMUNIST PARTY LEADERS (ESPECIALLY FROM ITALY) IT WAS DECIDED NOT TO DELAY IT, SINCE SOVIETS COULD NOT BE TRUSTED TO MAKE MORE THAN TOKEN TEMPORARY CONCESSIONS.

5. ABRAMOV SAID THAT INCREASING PROPORTION OF SOVIET JEWISH EMIGRANTS WERE CHOOSING COUNTRIES OTHER THAN ISRAEL, IN PART DUE TO NEW SOVIET SELECTIVITY IN GRANTING EXIT VISAS. IN RETURN FOR PROMISE NOT TO GO TO ISRAEL, JEWS FROM MOSCOW AND UKRAINE SUDDENLY FOUND THEIR EXIT PROCEDURE FACILITATED. HE CITED EXAMPLES OF SEVERAL HIGHLY SKILLED PERSON, A CATEGORY HITHERTO LARGELY EXCLUDED, GETTING VISAS IN RETURN FOR PLEDGE TO GO ELSEWHERE. ISRAELIS FEAR THAT ON BASIS OF THIS NEW SELECTIVITY SOVIETS WILL SOON POINT OUT THAT, IF MOST JEWS DO NOT GO TO ISRAEL, THEIR CASE FOR SPECIAL EMIGRATION CONCESSIONS IS NO LONGER RELIGIOUS AND THUS NO DIFFERENT FROM EMIGRATION CASES OF OTHER SOVIET CITIZENS.

6. ASIDE FROM NEW SOVIET SELECTIVITY IN GRANTING SUCH CONDITIONAL VISAS, ABRAMOV CITED AS OTHER REASONS FOR INCREASING PROCLIVITY OF RUSSIAN JEWS NOT TO COME TO ISRAEL THEIR FEAR OF MOVING INTO MIDDLE EAST WAR ZONE AND BECOMING SUBJECT TO MILITARY SERVICE IN ISRAEL. APPARENTLY THEY ARE UNAWARE THAT NEW IMMIGRANTS FROM COMMUNIST COUNTRIES ARE GENERALLY EXEMPT FROM MILITARY SERVICE FOR

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AT LEAST TWO YEARS AND MUST UNDERGO PRIOR SECURITY CLEARANCE. ORGANIZATIONS SPONSORING THE CONGRESS ARE NOW REPORTEDLY UNDERTAKING STUDY ON MOTIVATION OF SOVIET JEWS AND MEANS OF PERSUADING THEM IN VIENNA AND ELSEWHERE "TO REFLECT MORE CAREFULLY ON THEIR OPTIONS."
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